

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR JO IZ US XF

SUBJECT: TALKING POINTS FOR DISCUSSION WITH KING HUSSEIN
ON SECURITY IN THE GULF

REF: AMMAN 5645 (NOTAL)

FOR SAUNDERS FROM SOBER

1. FOLLOWING BACKGROUND AND TALKING POINTS PROVIDED IN
RESPONSE TO REQUEST IN PARA 17 REFTTEL.
2. ON JULY 24, GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ PRESENTED TO GULF STATE
AMBASSADORS IN BAGHDAD DRAFT "DECLARATION ON FREE NAVIGA-
TION IN THE ARAB GULF AND THE STRAITS OF HORMUZ." DOCU-
MENT, COUCHED IN VERY GENERAL TERMS, IS MOST RECENT MOVE
IN IRAQ'S CAMPAIGN TO ARABIZE THE GULF, WITH ITSELF AS
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SPOKESMAN OF LITTORAL STATES THERE. IN MOUNTING THIS CAM-
PAIGN, IRAQ HAS HAD TO CONTEND WITH SUSPICION OF SMALLER
GULF STATES THAT ITS ACTIONS ARE PART OF "GRAND DESIGN"
TO GAIN CONTROL OF GULF, AS WELL AS WITH OPPOSITION OF

IRAN, WHICH ENJOYS MUCH STRONGER POSITION AMONG LITTORAL STATES AND PREFERS MUCH STRONGER SECURITY AGREEMENT IN

GULF THAN IRAQ IS PREPARED TO SUPPORT AT THIS TIME.

3. NEVERTHELESS, THE DRAFT AGREEMENT, WHATEVER ITS CHANCES OF ADOPTION (WHICH MOST AGREE ARE SMALL), IS REFLECTION OF AN APPARENT MAJOR SHIFT IN IRAQI FOREIGN POLICY IN REGION OVER PAST YEAR. IRAQ, INCREASINGLY CONCERNED WITH ITS NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WITH ENSURING FREE PASSAGE FOR ITS EXPORTS THROUGH GULF, HAS MOVED FROM POLICY OF ACTIVE SUPPORT FOR SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS IN SEVERAL OF GULF STATES TO AN APPARENT MUTING OF SUCH SUPPORT. THIS SHIFT HAS IN TURN BEEN COUPLED WITH POSITIVE IRAQI STEPS TOWARD RAPPROCHEMENT WITH ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS (WITH OBVIOUS EXCEPTION OF SYRIA), EVEN INCLUDING THE CONSERVATIVE SHEIKHDOMS IN GULF, TRADITIONAL TARGETS OF REVOLUTIONARY IRAQI BA'ATH. THIS CHANGE HAS PERMITTED VISITS BY SAUDI CROWN PRINCE FAHD, BAHRAIN'S CROWN PRINCE HAMAD, AND THE RULER OF QATAR TO BAGHDAD, AND LED TO ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN OMAN AND IRAQ. ON THE OTHER HAND, IRAQIS HAVE YET TO INDICATE MOVEMENT TOWARD AMICABLE SETTLEMENT OF BORDER DISPUTE WITH KUWAIT. ALSO, BAATHI POLITICIANS IN BOTH IRAQ AND PDRY ARE ATTEMPTING TO CONTINUE GOOD RELATIONS, AND IRAQI EMBASSIES AND TRADING INSTITUTIONS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT LEFTIST DISSIDENT GROUPS IN GULF COUNTRIES.

4. TALKING POINTS (IF KING RAISES ISSUE):

-- WHILE UNDERSTANDING JORDANIAN CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE MOTIVES BEHIND IRAQ'S INCREASED CONTACTS WITH OTHER ARAB STATES IN THE GULF AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR GULF SECURITY, WE SEE IT AS POSITIVE STEP THAT IRAQ SEEMS TO BE TURNING NOW TO DEVELOPING ITS RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. WE HOPE SUCH AN APPROACH WILL MEAN AN INCREASE IN CONFIDENTIAL

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GULF STABILITY, AND INsofar AS THIS PROVES TO BE THE CASE, WE WELCOME IT.

-- A KEY INDICATOR IN OUR VIEW OF IRAQ'S REAL INTENTIONS WILL BE IF IT IS WILLING TO RESOLVE ITS BORDER PROBLEM WITH KUWAIT.

-- WE ARE, HOWEVER, FOLLOWING CLOSELY THE EVENTS IN THIS AREA, ESPECIALLY AS THEY AFFECT THE QUESTIONS OF SECURITY AND FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION IN THE GULF, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

-- WE HAVE NOT DETECTED ANY SERIOUS DETERIORATION IN THE

GENERAL SECURITY SITUATION IN THE LOWER GULF. THE OMANI PROSECUTION OF THE DHOFAR WAR SEEMS TO BE GOING QUITE WELL. SULTAN QABOOS HAS PLANS FOR A MAJOR FALL OFFENSIVE IN DHOFAR WHICH SHOULD FURTHER CONFINE THE REBELS, AND PDRY LEADERS SEEM MORE UNCERTAIN NOW OF WHICH WAY TO TURN. THE DHOFAR WAR IS NOW SHIFTING TO PACIFICATION AND CIVIL DEVELOPMENT.

-- IN THE CONTEXT OF THIS QUESTION OF GULF SECURITY, WE HAVE NOTED WITH SOME CONCERN THE RECENT IRAQI DRAFT DECLARATION CONCERNING THE NAVIGATIONAL RIGHTS OF SHIPS TRAVELLING THROUGH THE GULF. WE BELIEVE SUCH QUESTIONS AS PASSAGE THROUGH STRAITS AND INTERNATIONAL WATERS SHOULD NOT BE ADDRESSED ON A REGIONAL BASIS, WHERE THERE IS THE EVER-PRESENT DANGER OF RESTRICTIVE PRECEDENTS BEING SET REGARDING NAVIGATIONAL RIGHTS ON THE HIGH SEAS, BUT SHOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATION. THESE QUESTIONS ARE NOW BEING DISCUSSED IN CONNECTION WITH NEXT YEAR'S LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE AND SHOULD BE CONFINED TO THAT FORUM.

-- WE CONTINUE OF COURSE TO HOPE AND WORK FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS IN THIS AREA WHICH WILL PERMIT THE GROWTH OF STABLE REGIMES AND THE CONTINUED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SO VITAL TO THE REGION, AND WE APPRECIATE VERY MUCH THE KING'S OWN EFFORT ON BEHALF OF THESE OBJECTIVES. ROBINSON

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